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## SINGULAR CIRCUMSTANCE.

During the time of the cessation of arms, in the year 1777, while the articles of capitulation were preparing at Saratoga, the soldiers of the British and American armies often discoursed with each other from the opposite banks of Hudson's river, (which at Saratoga is about thirty yards wide, and not very deep.) A soldier in a British regiment, named Maguire, came down to the banks of the river with a number of his companions, who engaged in conversation with a party of Americans on the opposite shore. In a short time something was observed very forcibly to strike the mind of Maguire. He suddenly darted from his companions, and plunged into the stream. At the very same moment, one of the American soldiers, seized by a similar impulse, resolutely dashed into the water, from the opposite shore. The wondering soldiers on both sides, beheld them eagerly swim towards the middle of the river, where they met. They hung on each others necks, and wept; and the loud cries of "my dear brother! my dear brother!!" which accompanied the transaction, soon cleared up the mystery to the astonished spectators. They were brothers—the first had emigrated from Ireland, and the other had entered the army; one was in the British, and the other in the American service, totally ignorant until that hour, that they were engaged in hostile combat against each other's life.

## THE CRIMINAL.—A POEM.

He sitteth at the window of his cell,  
That blood-stained criminal, and his dark eye,  
Where joy and happiness were wont to dwell,  
Is full of deep despairing agony;  
A long, a bursting, and remorseful sigh,  
Proceedeth from his heart, and to his brow  
His hands are pressed, as tho' it were to try  
And crush the thoughts that sweep upon him now!

The thick dark bars almost exclude the day;  
Yet thro' them gleams one ray of quiv'ring light,  
Which, as tho' in mute mockery, doth play  
Around his form and makes that dungeon bright;  
The guilty one is fettered, and the night  
Of his young limbs is strongly bound with chains;  
But they do not confound the spirit's flight—  
No link its dreamy fantasies restrains.

And what now are his thoughts? His childhood's hour;  
His infant prattlings, and his sire's caress;  
But why doth his pale brow so sudden lour  
And darkly frown with phrenzied bitterness?  
He sees in thought his mother's mute distress  
When first he left his happy home: her eye  
With all a mother's doating tenderness  
Is fixed on his, full, agonized and dry.

His little sister too doth weeping stand,  
And looketh wistfully into his face;  
And his poor spaniel strives to lick his hand  
As he returneth from his bounding race.  
Those early scenes in after life we trace,  
And keen and bitter are the pangs they bring;  
But what were his—the branded with disgrace—  
Whose conscience goaded with undying sting?

Altho' he wept not, his dark tearless eye  
Had madd'ning grief in its half phrenzied stare;  
(That grief that hath no tears is agony—  
The very soul in silence it doth sear.)  
And to his fevered brow the cooling air  
Came murmuring through the prison bars, and played  
With the damp matted tresses of his hair,  
And fanned his cheek so wan and so decayed!

There is beside him an old feeble man,  
With deeply furrowed brow and silvery hair,  
He speaks of mercy—of the glorious plan  
Which saves the sorrowing sinner from despair;  
Now from his lips a pious fervent prayer  
Is breathed for thee, for that dark man of crime,  
Who heareth all, gazeth on him as it were  
On some soft spirit from a purer clime,

Oh! there are feelings in the human heart  
That may for years lie hushed in deep repose,  
Then in a moment from their slumber start,  
Roused by the bitterness of human woes;  
And dreadful are their agonizing throes:  
The pangs of our whole life, in one wild sweep,  
Rush o'er the soul—the blood half stagnant flows,  
How blest are they who at such time can weep!

"Father," he said, while o'er his features came  
A slight convulsive spasm, as he tried  
To struggle with the consciousness of shame,  
And fain his deeds from all the world would hide.  
His voice was choking too as tho' he tried  
To force himself to speak; and one faint tinge  
Of crimson flushed his cheek, while tears did glide  
In silence from beneath his eyes' dark fringe.

"Father! I had one sister—a sweet child;—  
I loved her: she was all in all to me;—  
So pure—so young—so beautiful—so mild—  
So full of joy and youth's vivacity!  
We were, when young, left orphans; and as she  
Had no fond mother to watch o'er her youth,  
My pride, my only pride, was eye to be  
Instructing her in innocence and truth.

She grew up in her beauty, like a flower,  
And loved me with an intense tenderness;  
And were we parted but one little hour,  
When I'd return I'd find her in distress;  
Then to my heart her yielding form I'd press,  
And kiss the tear-drops from her radiant eyes;  
And they would laugh in their own happiness,  
And brighten with her young heart's extacies!

Too soon, alas! the fell destroyer came  
To wither up this flower with the blight  
Of trust betrayed. He left her unto shame.  
Her beauty faded—and her eye, so bright,  
Grew glazed and lustreless. With aching sight  
I saw her day by day grow worse. *She died.*  
Then what was life to me? One endless night!  
A dark, a stagnant, changeless, hopeless tide!

I lived but for revenge! I murdered him;—  
I dashed him to the earth with giant force:  
I gloated on each tortured stiffening limb:  
Within my veins the blood did boiling course;  
*But in one moment, at its very source,*  
It grew congealed, and cold, cold, cold, and still:  
I gazed upon the silent reeking corpse  
And felt the pangs of him that blood doth spill!

I quaffed the maddening wine-cup—but it seemed  
As tho' it were his blood! I tried to sleep—  
But when I did—oh! God on high!--I dreamed,  
I always dreamed of him. I could not weep;  
My eyes were dry; my anguish was too deep  
For tears. I tried in God to disbelieve;  
But nought, nought, nought stern thought from me could  
keep;  
Nought could my bursting anguish'd heart relieve!"

He spoke no more—the life blood quivering ran  
Back to his heart, which burst, and on the floor  
He sank a lifeless corpse. The good old man  
Strove to restore him—but all pain was o'er.  
His manly features were convulsed—they bore  
The trace of recent anguish; his dark eye  
Was sternly fixed and rayless; never more  
Could he feel earthly pain or agony!

OSCAR.

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